

As of July 1, 2010 the three Growth Management Hearings Boards are consolidated into one statewide board and more changes are on the way. These changes result from two new laws approved by the 2010 Legislative session.

[Substitute Senate Bill 6214](#), consolidates the previous three regional Boards, each comprised of three board members, into one statewide board of seven members. The new law retains three geographic areas (Eastern, Central Puget Sound and Western Washington), but challenges to the GMA will be heard by three-member panels comprised of two members residing in the geographic area of a challenge, with the third member to be drawn from one of the other regions. The Presiding Officer will be a resident of the Region in which the case arose. The legislation requires at least one member must be an attorney, one must be a former elected city or county official and the panel should reflect the political composition of the board although exceptions are allowed in case of emergencies and workload. All cases will continue to be heard within the geographic area of a challenge.

The second law, [Substitute House Bill 2935](#) was sponsored by Governor Gregoire as part of her Natural Resources Reform effort. SHB 2935 eliminates three of the five Boards within the Environmental Hearings Office (EHO) leaving only the Pollution Control Hearings Board (PCHB) and the Shoreline Hearings Board (SHB) intact. While SHB 2935 contains a number of provisions aimed at making appeal timelines more consistent across a range of environmental statutes, the changes **do not** apply to GMA appeals pursued at the GMHB or those pursued under the Land Use Petition Act (LUPA) in Superior Court.

SHB 2935 also requires that on July 1, 2011, the newly reconstituted GMHB will administratively consolidate with the EHO. Together, they will comprise the Environmental and Land Use Hearings Office (EHULO), which will have a director appointed by the Governor from board members of the GMHB or PCHB. In addition SHB 2935 gives the Governor authority to reduce the seven-member GMHB to six members as of July 1, 2012, based on an analysis of caseload.

Throughout the coming year the GMHB and the EHO offices will work together to put in place policies, procedures and practices to create a smooth transition into one administrative office by July 1, 2011. We will provide periodic updates of our progress on this website.